



ALL ABOUT SELECTING HIGH QUALITY HAY

Providing high quality hay is one of your most important responsibilities as the caretaker of a small herbivore. Whether you're a first-time pet parent, or an experienced pet caretaker, selecting the right hay to meet your animals' needs can be an intimidating process.

This guide is designed to make the hay selection process as easy and enjoyable as possible. From understanding differences between types of hay and hay cuttings, to helpful tips for evaluating and selecting premium hay, we hope this guide will help you increase your knowledge and confidence when it comes to selecting hay for your pets.

Tips for Selecting Quality Hay

Every pet parent wants to offer their furry friend the freshest, most premium hay possible. Consider and evaluate the following factors to help select a hay that meets all of your pet's nutritional needs (and one that he is likely to consume enthusiastically):

Aroma

Choose hay that smells fresh and avoid anything with a musty or "off" smell.

Color

Choose a hay with a nice green color, but remember that color is not a 100% accurate indicator of quality. Natural variations in color (including small amounts of brown or sun-bleached hay) can occur as the result of maturity, Mother Nature, and other harvest-related factors.

Texture/Feel

Choose a hay that is soft and pliable in the bag, but remember that some varieties (such as Oat Hay) are coarser than others by nature.

Stem to Leaf Ratio

Choose a hay with a good balance of leaves and stems. Stems are important nutritionally (high in fiber), but hay with an ample quantity of fresh leaves will likely be very appetizing and enjoyed by your pets.



Oxbow's Customer Care Team Our Front-Line Hay Experts

Our Customer Care Team is dedicated to sharing Oxbow's expert knowledge and education with all customers. These passionate team members work in concert with our Product Quality team to ensure that Oxbow products are supported at every stage – from plant to pet. If you ever have a question about your Oxbow hay, don't hesitate to reach out to us! We look forward to hearing from you!

How can Customer Care assist you today?



info@oxbowanimalhealth.com



(800) 249-0366





Selecting the Right Hay at Every Stage of Life

Young pets require more energy than their adult counterparts. This energy should come primarily in the form of a legume hay such as alfalfa. Alfalfa offers the same long-strand fiber found in grass hays, but with a richer flavor and more protein, energy and calcium. Pregnant or nursing pets will also benefit from the inclusion of alfalfa in their diets.

When animals reach adulthood, they should be transitioned to grass hays which better meet their nutrient needs. The nutrient needs of adult pets include higher fiber, lower protein, and lower calcium. Popular grass hay options for adult herbivores include Western Timothy, Oat Hay, Orchard Grass, Organic Meadow Hay, and others.

Alfalfa

- Richer flavor
- More protein, energy, and calcium
- Ideal for young, pregnant, and nursing pets



Grass Hay

- Describes most non-alfalfa varieties
- Higher fiber
- Lower protein and calcium
- Ideal for adult pets, enjoyed by young pets as well



The Oxbow Hay Difference

As a pet parent, you want to feed your companions a product that offers guaranteed nutrition and consistent, premium quality that you know they will enjoy. That's what Oxbow wants as well, and we've specialized in producing premium hay for over 25 years. Recommended by veterinarians worldwide, Oxbow hay features all the following attributes:

- Grown and harvested by experts in ideal climates
- Extensively quality tested at all stages
- Gently processed and de-dusted to remove fine particles
- Carefully hand-sorted by dedicated experts
- Supported by exceptional, caring customer service



Which Cutting of Hay is Best for My Pet?

A hay "cutting" refers to the number of crops harvested from a particular field. "First cutting" references the initial crop from a field, with a sequential cutting or cuttings often following later in the season. Many pet parents have perceptions about the different attributes of hay cuttings. A more important and reliable quality indicator is harvest timing as it relates to the development of the plant. All Oxbow hay is purposefully harvested at a young stage of the plant's growth, whether it's during a first or later cutting. Cutting hay early in its development allows Oxbow to consistently harvest hay with premium characteristics, including higher nutritional value, better color, and ideal product softness.



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